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Senate

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Maryland.

I voted for the original budget resolution a month or so ago. I did so because I believe we ought to cut taxes and cut marginal tax rates, eliminate the marriage penalty, and provide estate tax relief. I would like to see us increase the child tax credit.

I also voted for a budget resolution that dramatically increased Federal funding for education. We are in the throes, last week and this week, of redefining the Federal role in education in this country. Part of that legislation says to States: We expect you to narrow the achievement gap for all your students over the next 10 years. We expect your students to perform at higher marks, making progress along the achievement path toward being able to read well and doing math well.

If States, school districts, and schools do not measure up, under the accountability provisions of the education bill on which we are working, there is real accountability and real consequences for those schools that do not measure up, that do not make progress, and that do not narrow the achievement gap.

Meanwhile, in our Nation's Capital, we fund one out of every three children for Head Start. We do not provide for the others.

We fund one out of every three kids who are eligible for title I funding. These are kids who need extra help, especially in reading

and math.

For special ed students, we meet one-third of what we promised to fund. We are supposed to be providing 40 percent. We do about 13 percent. We are pretty good at thirds.

We had hoped the budget resolution that came back to us would meet some of those shortcomings. It does not. Regrettably, there is not more money for Head Start, there is precious little more money for title I, and there is precious little more money to meet our obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

I cannot support this conference report on the budget resolution. I wish I could, but I cannot.

This is what I fear we are going to end up doing. I fear we are going to end up cutting taxes more than we ought to and, in the end, come back and say we are spending more money than we can afford. We went down that path in 1981, and my fear is we are going to go right down that same path in 2001.

We do not have to do it. The real tragedy is we could have had a broad bipartisan agreement on a tax cut of a trillion dollars. We could invest in education, defense, and needed investments in health care, and we could have had a bipartisan majority do that. My fear is we are, in the end, shortchanging the States, the schools, and the kids about whom we say we care so much.

I wish it did not have to be this way.
Unless we defeat this budget resolution
tomorrow, it will be.

I, again, thank the Senator from
Maryland for yielding me this time.